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JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: OPRC KMDR TU PREL KPAO  
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2010

#### Media Highlights

US Embassy Ankara - Turkey Media Reaction - February 4, as prepared by the Public Affairs Information Office

#### How the US is Playing

PKK Leader Karayilan Threatens the US (NTVMSNBC website)  
NTVMSNBC reported online that PKK "terror organization chieftain" Murat Karayilan sent "instructions" to his militants in rural areas and the leaders in Europe, warning against the US "reconnaissance flights" in northern Iraq, and claiming that the US aims to eliminate the PKK cadres through assassinations. "The US provides arms, ammunition and other technical and intelligence support to Turkey. If the US, in addition, gives Turkey 'special assassination planes,' it will mean direct inclusion in the war," said Karayilan's statement, noting the PKK would hold the US "directly responsible" if these planes are used in striking at the PKK leaders and cadres.

#### In the Headlines

##### Iran - Protests and Nuclear

In "Ahmadinejad's Power Show Fails to Stop Opposition," mainstream Vatan portrays Iranian president Ahmadinejad as making a 'show of force' on the anniversary of the Islamic revolution." Liberal Radikal in "Stones to Opposition, Cynicism to the West," opines "as the Iranian regime smothered Tehran with Basij militia on the 31st anniversary of the Islamic revolution, Ahmadinejad "mocked the West by claiming that Iran has succeeded in enriching uranium to 20 percent," noting that they have the capability of enriching to 80 percent enrichment." In "We Are Now A Nuclear State," mainstream Sabah emphasizes "Iranian leader Ahmadinejad announced that Iran now is a 'nuclear state,' while leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet calls it "Iran is Now a Nuclear State." In a side story with "White House Doesn't Believe in Iran," Sabah cites WH Spokesperson Robert Gibbs as saying "Iranian leaders' have made a series of statements that are based on politics, not on physics." Mainstream Aksam in "Tehran in Turmoil on Revolution Anniversary," highlights how internal problems including growing domestic opposition put Iran in trouble. Aksam reports "Iran blocks the communication channels, announces

plans to cut Gmail and create a national e-mail service. Gmail has confirmed users in Iran are having trouble accessing Gmail."

#### Op-Eds on Iran-Turkey

While papers extensively cover turmoil in Iran, pundits also advise Turkey to pay more attention to human rights violations in the country. In "Iran Puts Turkey in Difficult Situation," columnist Cengiz Candar of liberal Radikal warns: "Turkey should stay its refrain from giving an image of turning a blind eye to human rights violations in Iran as if taking sides with Iran on the nuclear dispute." The writer concludes negative consequences otherwise "not only for the region but for the entire world." Soli Ozel in mainstream HaberTurk calls Ankara to be more careful on Iran: "While the Iranian regime faces the most serious problems inside, it is also making itself an unreliable player internationally. This approach cannot last long. Given the current conditions, Turkey will find itself forced to take a side when UNSC begin voting on the sanctions." However, Islamist Yeni Safak's Tamer Korkmaz has a different approach as he suggests Turkey should not attach itself to the Western policies: "Despite Washington's pressure, Ankara is doing the right thing by following its own policy line on Iran, Afghanistan and Middle East issues. The US-NATO formulations for these issues do not have any chance for success."

Afghan Chief of General Staff: "We Would Welcome More Turkish Troops"

Mainstreams Hurriyet and Aksam and leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet report that Afghan Chief of General Staff General Muhammedi met with visiting Turkish journalists yesterday. Responding to a question regarding Turkish combat troops, Muhammedi said "The whole world

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knows the depth of Turkish-Afghan friendship is based on history. We cannot value the assistance Turkey extends us in millions of dollars. To date, Turkish soldiers have never had a wrong behavior against the Afghan people. We don't even need a visa to go to Turkey. Turkey is like my second home. The aim of the Coalition Force operations here is to clear the country's borders of enemies. Afghanistan's enemies are the Taliban, Al-Qaeda and Gulbettin Hikmetyar. My country needs the ISAF until it stands on its own feet. The Afghan national military will succeed in overcoming the country's challenges in two to three years. If more Turkish troops are sent, that will be to Afghanistan's interest because presence of Turkish troops here doesn't mean that we are having foreign troops. They are considered locals." Hurriyet notes that Turkish troops started training 600 Afghan soldiers in Kabul who will join the Afghan army after two months training. Cumhuriyet notes that the Turkish military is planning to train over 5,000 Afghan soldiers. Of that number, 1440 will be trained in Isparta-Turkey and the remaining 3,600 will be trained in Afghanistan before they join the Afghan National Army.

#### Op-Ed on Turkey-Afghanistan

While the accomplishments of Turkish forces in Afghanistan dominate stories in the Turkish press, one pundit questions the reason for flattering words for the Turks. In mainstream Milliyet, Melih Asik wonders why General McChrystal was praising Turkish soldiers: "American general says they are taking Turkish soldiers as good examples. Didn't the same US put sacks on Turkish soldiers in Iraq? That was then, this is now, because Turkish soldiers are about to be sent to combat zones in Afghanistan."

#### President Gul Responds to Armenian President's Message

All papers today report on President Gul's response to the good-will message issued by Armenian President Serj Sargsian while flying over Turkey. In his message G|1 stressed Turkish determination to advance the process of normalizing ties with Armenia and added that no change in the content of the protocols signed with Armenia was on the agenda. Hurriyet quotes Gul as saying "Overcoming the long-established prejudices and nurturing mutual understanding and trust among our two neighboring peoples were indeed our main objectives when endorsing the process of normalization between our countries. You should have no doubt that our determination to move these objectives forward is intact, provided that this resolve and commitment remains reciprocal." Gul added that he will continue to

deal with the current process personally.

Erdogan: "For God's Sake, Is the European Parliament Blind?" (Hurriyet)

All papers report Prime Minister Erdogan lashed out at the EU over its Turkey policies and criticized the EU Parliament's 2009 Progress Report on Turkey as "one-sided." During a luncheon yesterday that he hosted for the ambassadors of the EU countries, Erdogan said "Regretfully, the Turkish public has become frustrated by anti-enlargement remarks and debates as to whether Turkey is a part of Europe." Commenting on the parliament's endorsement of the report which criticized Turkey on the Cyprus issue, the PM said "It's upsetting that the report touches on what Turkey has failed to do but fails to mention the promises that the EU failed to meet regarding Cyprus."

The Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) has also expressed disappointment with the Cyprus chapter of the report, saying the European Parliament ignored Turkish efforts for settlement on the divided island and acted like a "spokesman of the Greek Cypriots." In the statement released Thursday, the MFA said "It's thought-provoking that the report stressed what is expected from Turkey but ignored what commitments the EU has failed to carry out toward Turkey."

Turkey's Armenian Daily Agos Hacked, Threatened (Hurriyet online) Television stations and dailies' websites report this morning that the website of Turkey's leading Armenian newspaper Agos was hacked

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in the early hours on Friday. Mainstream Hurriyet online says hackers calling themselves "AK Hacker" hacked the Agos website and put up a picture of Ogun Samast, the alleged murderer of the paper's editor, Hrant Dink. The note also said, "If you don't fix your reporting in the way we see fit, there will be new Ogun Samasts and new Hrant Dinks."

Gay-Lesbian Organization Faces Closure in Turkey (Hurriyet online) Mainstream Hurriyet, NTVMSNBC and other websites report Friday morning that another Turkish gay-lesbian association, Black Pink Triangle, was facing closure due to a court case which was launched February 9 over a governor's office complaint that the association's purposes violated "Turkish moral values and family structure." Hurriyet says the case against the Izmir-based Black Pink Triangle Organization was not the first case opened against gay organizations, adding that the Interior Ministry has repeatedly attempted the closure of such organizations on similar claims -- Kaos-GL in 2005 and Pink Life in 2006.

TV Spotlight (CNN Turk)

The meeting of labor union Turk-Is leader Mustafa Kumlu with PM Erdogan on the situation of "Tekel" workers ended to no avail. The hunger strike of 16 workers continues.

During Thursday's debates in the parliament, Interior Minister Besir Atalay said all unresolved murders were resolved under the AK Party in government.

Diyarbakir prosecutor ordered detention of Kurdish singer Rojda Senses on charges of making "terror propaganda" with a song she sang at a festival in Diyarbakir last year.

Businessman Mehmet Kurt, the former owner of Kanal 6 TV, and two associates have been taken into custody for being the financial supporter of the 'Ergenekon' network.

The government has submitted to the parliament a draft for the establishment of a "Directorate" for Turks living abroad.

European Union leaders pledged readiness to support debt-stricken Greece.

After four years, Syria has received a request from Washington to accredit a US ambassador to Damascus.

The Yemeni authorities have announced a ceasefire with Shia rebels

fighting government forces in the north.

A total of 110 reporters were killed in the course of their work in 2009, making the year the most lethal for journalists over the past decade.

JEFFREY